

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

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PASS AGRICULTURE AND STR ELECTRONICALLY

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TAGS: ETRD, MTN, EAGR, RO

SUBJECT: U.S. AGRICULTURAL CONSULTATIONS WITH ROMANIA

REF: 76 MTN GENEVA 7254

1. SUMMARY. MTN DEL HELD CONSULTATIONS WITH ROMANIA FEBRUARY 25 ON ROMANIA'S NOTIFICATION AGAINST THE U.S. (REFTEL) UNDER GROUP AGRICULTURE "OTHER PRODUCTS" PROCEDURES. THE CONSULTATION BROUGHT OUT ROMANIA'S CONCERN THAT THE MTN AGRICULTURAL NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT FOCUS ON GRAINS, MEAT AND DAIRY PRODUCTS AT THE EXPENSE OF "OTHER PRODUCTS". ROMANIA'S MAIN INTERESTS IN THE AGRICULTURAL NEGOTIATIONS ARE THE REDUCTION OF TARIFFS, INCLUDING LOW TARIFFS AND THE ALLEVIATION OF SPECIFIC PROBLEMS FOR ROMANIAN EXPORTERS CAUSED BY U.S. TECHNICAL CONTROL MEASURES. END SUMMARY.

2. ROMANIA DEL (PETRESCOU), ACCOMPANIED BY GIONE (FOREIGN TRADE MINISTRY) EXPRESSED ROMANIA'S CONCERN THAT THE MTN AGRICULTURAL NEGOTIATIONS WOULD CONCENTRATE

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TOO HEAVILY ON PRODUCTS IN THE THREE AGRICULTURAL SUB-GROUPS, GRAINS, MEAT AND DAIRY. HE SAID THAT ROMANIA HAS LITTLE INTEREST IN GRAINS AND DAIRY. ITS MOST IMPORTANT PRODUCT EXPORTED TO THE U.S. IS PORT WHICH HAS SO FAR NOT BEEN ADDRESSED IN THE MEAT SUBGROUP. ON THE OTHER HAND, ROMANIA IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN A NUMBER OF PRODUCTS INCLUDED IN THE "OTHER PRODUCTS"

CATEGORY.

3. THE ROMANIAN DEL ACKNOWLEDGED THE U.S. POSITION THAT AGRICULTURAL TARIFFS ARE TO BE COVERED BY THE TARIFF FORMULA. ROMANIA FINDS IT NEVERTHELESS IMPORTANT TO INDICATE THE PRODUCTS IN WHICH IT HAS A PARTICULAR TARIFF INTEREST. HE ADDED THAT EVEN LOW DUTIES DIS-ADVANTAGE ROMANIA BECAUSE OF THE SOPHISTICATED NATURE OF THE U.S. MARKET IN WHICH IT IS DIFFICULT FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO COMPETE WITH DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

4. ROMANIA'S MAJOR COMPLAINT ABOUT NTM'S CONCERNS THE FREQUENCY OF CHANGES IN CERTAIN U.S. TECHNICAL NORMS AND THE FACT THAT THEY OFTEN CALL FOR NEW TECHNOLOGY (E.G., TESTING EQUIPMENT) IN ORDER TO PASS U.S. REQUIREMENTS. THESE FREQUENT CHANGES DISTURB NORMAL PRODUCTION ROUTINES.

5. ON THE SPECIFIC PRODUCTS NOTIFIED, ROMANIA MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. THE ROMANIAN DEL ADMITTED THAT ONLY "PREPARED MEAT OF SWINE" REPRESENTS AT PRESENT A SUBSTANTIAL EXPORT ITEM FOR ROMANIA TO THE U.S. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT ROMANIA WAS HOPEFUL THAT TARIFF REDUCTIONS AND IN CERTAIN CASES LIBERALIZED NTM'S, WOULD OPEN THE MARKET TO THE OTHER POTENTIAL EXPORT ITEMS NOTIFIED (I.E., DRIED PRUNES, PREPARED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES INCLUDING TOMATO PASTE AND PRESERVED MUSHROOMS, AND WINE).
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B. ROMANIA'S SPECIFIC PROBLEMS WITH PREPARED PORT INVOLVE (1) THE FREQUENT CHANGES IN U.S. INGREDIENT AND LABELLING REQUIREMENTS; AND (2) THE LONGER MATURITY PERIOD REQUIRED ON DRIED SALAMI FROM ROMANIA (90 DAYS) AS OPPOSED TO DRIED SALAMI FROM, SAY, DENMARK (45 DAYS).

C. FOR TOMATO PASTE, ROMANIA'S DIFFICULTY STEMS FROM A U.S. STANDARD ON "MUSTINESS" WHICH REQUIRES EXPENSIVE TESTING EQUIPMENT (CITING THE "HOWARD" METHOD). THE ROMANIAN DEL EXPLAINED THAT ROMANIA'S TESTING METHOD, USING MICROSCOPES, WAS NOT CONSIDERED ADEQUATE.

6. WITH REGARD TO TECHNICAL NORMS, ROMANIA ASKED WHETHER IT MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO STUDY THE POSSIBILITY OF MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF TEXTS THROUGH AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION SO THAT PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES'

TEST METHODS AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS, WHICH ARE
RECOGNIZED AS EQUIVALENT, MIGHT BE MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE.

7. ROMANIAN DEL ADDED THAT THE LIST OF ITEMS NOTIFIED
WAS NOT EXHAUSTIVE AND THAT ROMANIA MIGHT BE NOTIFYING
THE U.S. OF ADDITIONAL PRODUCTS IN THE FUTURE.
ROMANIAN DEL REMINDED U.S. THAT THEIR OBJECTIVE IN THE
AGRICULTURAL NEGOTIATIONS IS LIBERALIZATION BUT THAT
ROMANIA AT THE SAME TIME CAN ACCEPT CERTAIN MARKETING
DISCIPLINES. THEY SAID THAT, UNFORTUNATELY, SUCH
DISCIPLINES HAVE NOT BEEN DESCRIBED IN DETAIL BY THE
MAJOR PARTICIPANTS.

8. U.S. DEL (KOENIG) TOOK NOTE OF ALL POINTS MADE BY
ROMANIA. HE REITERATED THE U.S. POSITION ON THE
NEGOTIATION OF AGRICULTURAL TARIFFS AND SAID THAT THE
U.S. WOULD NOTE ROMANIA'S PARTICULAR INTEREST IN THE
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TARIFFS NOTIFIED. U.S. DEL ALSO REPEATED THE U.S.
POSITION REGARDING TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND STATED
THAT THE DRAFT STANDARDS CODE MIGHT SERVE TO ALLEVIATE
SOME OF ROMANIA'S PROBLEMS. WALKER

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